

Lyceum of Nat. Hist.

CHARTER,

CONSTITUTION, AND BY-LAWS

OF THE

**LYCEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY**

IN

THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.

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INCORPORATED APRIL 20, 1818.

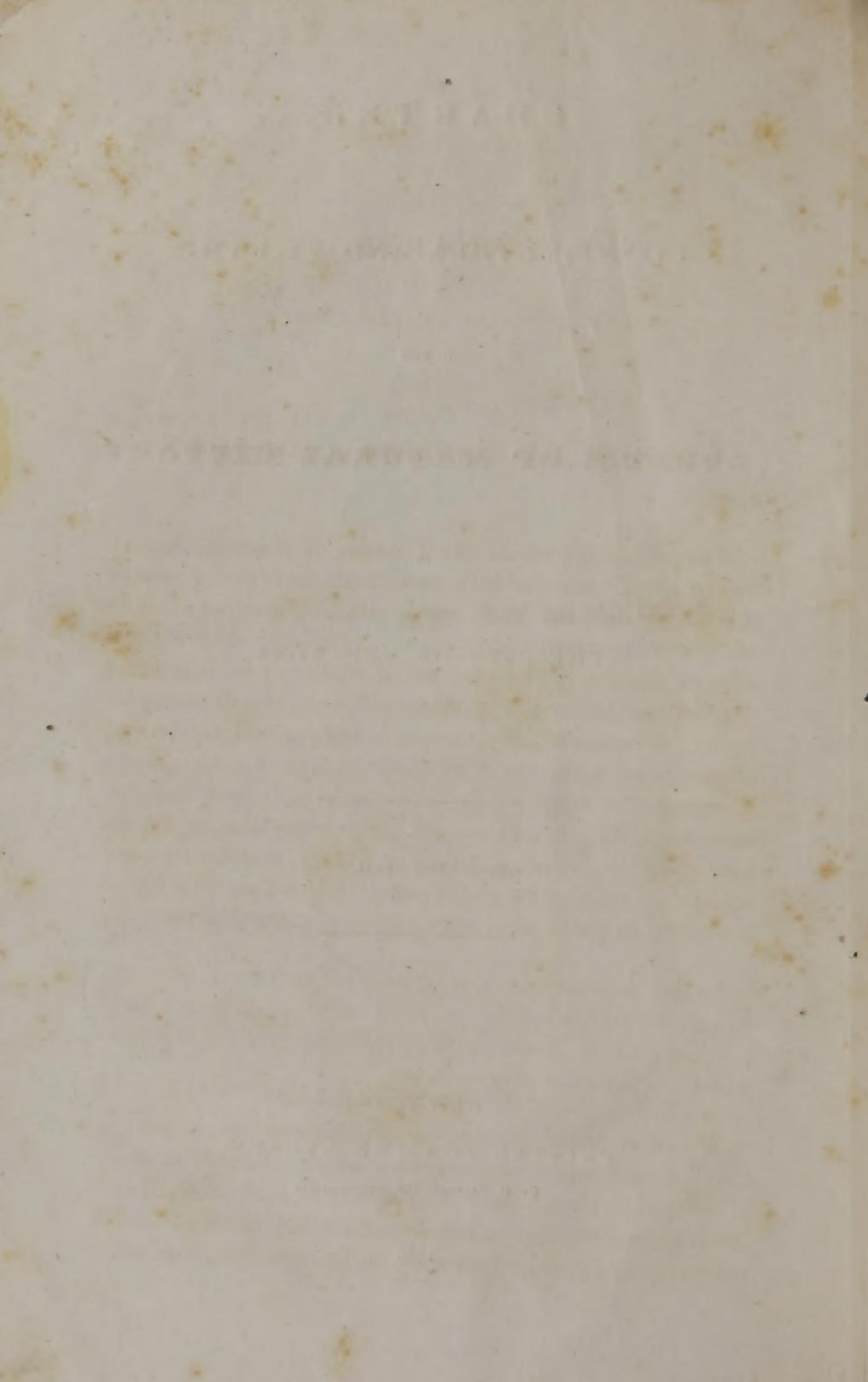


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.....  
1835.



## REMARKS

### EXPLANATORY OF THE OBJECTS OF THE LYCEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.

THE object for which the Lyceum of Natural History was originally founded by a small number of young men in this city in the year 1817, was to avail themselves of each other's co-operation and resources in the cultivation of their favorite science. The cost and difficulty to an individual of procuring the requisite means of study, the necessity as well as pleasure of sometimes conferring and comparing observations with others similarly occupied, with all the advantages of combination which originally united them, have kept them together until the present time, and enabled them to collect a valuable library, and a numerous cabinet of specimens, in the use of which they now invite the public to participate upon terms of mutual advantage.

As few persons form just ideas of what Natural History, as now studied, consists, we shall endeavor to give a brief summary of its principal subdivisions, and the subjects which they respectively embrace.

The first grand division or province of this science is that called *Zoology*, or the science which relates to animals of every kind, their habits, their structure, both external and internal, and the characteristics which they possess in common with, or by which they may be distinguished from, each

other; that is, all their mutual relations; according to which they are arranged in a regularly graduated system. As immediately connected with, if not forming a part of Zoölogy, we shall first mention

*Physiology* and *Anatomy*, more especially those of animals, or *comparative anatomy*, the science of the structure and organs of animals, their functions, and their different degrees of complication. Upon a knowledge of these must be founded all accurate acquaintance with those branches, which are considered as more especially the province of Natural History.

1. *Mammalia*, or those animals which suckle their young, form the first class. Their importance to man, and the advantages of studying their history, are evident.
2. *Ornithology* relates to birds, which are the most distinct and most readily known of all the classes.
3. *Herpetology*. Reptiles, including tortoises, lizards, serpents, and animals of the frog kind. Many of these are distinguished for their great size, the singularity of their forms, colors, their noxious or useful properties. In the older ages of creation they seem to have played a far more important part than is now assigned them.
4. *Ichthyology*. Fishes. One of the most interesting though least cultivated departments of our science.
5. *Molluscous animals*, or shell-fish proper, and their *shells*, which may be separately studied, the latter constituting *Conchology*.
6. *Annelides*, or annulose animals, a very numerous and common, though much neglected class. Many of them

present singular forms and beautiful colors. They are chiefly aquatic, and some have important medical uses.

7. *Crustacea*, or crustaceous animals, some of which, as various species of crabs and lobsters, are familiarly known.
8. *Arachnides*, or spiders. Generally repulsive to most observers, but worthy of investigation on account of their economy and habits.
9. *Entomology*. Insects, so interesting on account of their exterior forms, their organization and their habits. They form probably the most numerous class of created beings, and though minute in size, acquire importance from their numbers. Overlooked, and too often despised by man, his happiness or misery are sometimes influenced by them to a degree scarcely suspected. The farmer and the horticulturist have no enemies so dangerous and so difficult to guard against. Much of this danger might be obviated, if the habits and history of the tribes of insect predators were sufficiently known and attended to. The forest, the garden, and the field become the prey of their unseen myriads, while the suffering cultivator, for want of a little acquaintance with entomology, cannot even identify the ravager, which would be the first step toward discovering a remedy.
10. The *Zoophytes*, or radiary animals, so multifarious as to form one of the four great divisions of zoology. They include the *echinodermata*, of which the starfish and sea-egg are well known examples—the intestinal worms—the *acalepha*, or sea-nettles, common in our harbor—the *polypes*, including all the sea-anemones, the corals, sea-fans, &c.—the *infusory animals*, nearly invisible. These are found, upon a little investigation, to comprise an infinite multitude of highly curious and varied beings, which,

if they are of importance in no other light, at least can testify to the power and wisdom of their Creator.

*Botany*, in its most extensive acceptation, forms the second province of Natural History—a pursuit which, in some shape or other, finds universal favor, and needs not our feeble commendation. There are few, however, of its votaries among us who would not find their enjoyments multiplied by taking up the study with more method, and examining a little into its principles. We have numerous florists, arboriculturists, horticulturists of every kind, but, unfortunately, few botanists; more, it is believed, for want of guides to put them in the right track, than from any deficiency of laudable curiosity to know more of the science. This want it will be the duty and the pleasure of our Institution to supply.

*Mineralogy* is the third province of Natural History. Its economical uses are so obvious that they need only be alluded to. It has ever been a principal object with the Lyceum, to investigate the mineral riches of this country, and to assemble in their cabinet the most complete series of ores, earths, marbles, and every other mineral substance, either useful in the arts or interesting to the man of science, that could be procured, especially such as were the production of the United States; and in this they have so far succeeded as to form a very rich and extensive collection, embracing the amplest means of instruction in this important science.

*Chemistry* is so intimately connected with mineralogy, that the study of one involves necessarily a knowledge of the other. It has always been regarded as a legitimate branch of our pursuits.

*Geology*, which, though not technically a part of Natural History, cannot be profitably studied by any one who is not

well grounded in every branch of it, comes with much propriety within the scope of our labors. *Mineral Geology*, or that which treats of the strata composing the crust of the earth, and the order in which they are placed over each other, or the superposition of rocks, has an obvious bearing upon the interesting subject of the search after useful minerals. Principles have been established by geologists which are often, though not so much as they might be, of direct practical application in the most important mining enterprises. *Fossil Geology* unfolds to the zoological antiquary events of the most unexpected kind, and of even romantic interest, which carry him back to ages when animals and plants, of forms the strangest, the most unlike those he is now conversant with, occupied the same countries, though with a different climate. Their vestiges alone remain, but they suffice to transport us, in idea, far beyond the present limits of creation, into times of an antiquity such as even the boldest imagination had not ventured to penetrate, and to impress us with the sublimity of Nature.

It has been justly said of Natural History, that it is extensive enough for the vastest intellect, varied and interesting enough to soothe the most agitated mind; that it consoles the wretched, and calms the passions. Nothing is better adapted than this peaceful study to nourish that demand for occupation which, if not properly directed, too often seeks for gratification in dangerous or culpable modes. The method, the connected chain of investigation which the naturalist is obliged to employ, is not the least of its recommendations. The habit thus acquired may be advantageously applied in other and perhaps more important affairs. Every discussion which supposes a classification of facts, every research which requires a distribution of materials, is conducted according to the same laws. The young man, whose sole object in studying this science may have been amusement, is surprised at the

facility he has acquired for clearing up intricate questions of every kind.

Natural History, as we have above defined it, is at present the most popular and extensively cultivated in Europe, of all the sciences. To the youthful mind there is none so attractive, so fascinating, or that excites stronger enthusiasm among its votaries. There are few young persons who have not, at some time or other, found themselves interested in collecting or examining minerals, shells, birds, plants, or insects. The cultivation of this taste would ensure them a never-failing resource, calculated to fill up, in an innocent and praiseworthy occupation, many moments that would otherwise be lost or misemployed.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION  
TO THE STOCK  
OF THE  
LYCEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY  
IN THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.

*First.*—The stock to be divided into shares of one hundred dollars each.

*Second.*—A stockholder to be entitled, for himself and family, to free admission to the Museum of the Society, and to such public lectures as may be delivered in its behalf, and to which the members of the Lyceum have a right to attend; and also to have the privilege of introducing strangers to the Museum and Lectures, in accordance with the regulations.

*Third.*—A stockholder to be entitled to the use of the books of the library of the Lyceum.

*Fourth.*—A member becoming a stockholder, to be exempted from the initiation fees, and to the annual payments due subsequent to the date of his subscription.

*Fifth.*—The shares, with their privileges, may be transferred or bequeathed.

*Sixth.*—The sum of five thousand dollars, exclusive of the Society's subscription, to be subscribed before the stockholders are liable for their shares.

*The following Gentlemen have already taken shares.*

	Shares. Doll's.		Shares. Doll's.
The Lyceum of Na- tural History,	25 2500	H. C. De Rham,	1 100
Chas. Wilkes,	1 100	Henry Cary,	1 100
William Johnson,	1 100	Peter Remsen,	1 100
Henry Parish,	1 100	O. Mauran,	1 100
Philip Hone,	1 100	And. Foster, Jun.	1 100
John W. Francis,	1 100	Frederick Gebhard,	1 100
J. A. Constant,	1 100	David S. Jones,	1 100
Robert Ray,	1 100	John H. Hicks,	1 100
Arthur Tappan,	1 100	Henry W. Hicks,	1 100
P. G. Stuyvesant,	1 100	J. Boorman,	1 100
Thomas W. Ludlow,	1 100	Jer. Van Rensselaer,	1 100
G. Hoyt,	1 100	Charles Cramer,	1 100
William Cooper,	1 100	Wm. C. Rhinelander,	1 100
Augustus Fleming,	1 100	John C. Halsey,	1 100
Cornelius Low,	1 100	Stephen A. Halsey,	1 100
H. McCrackan,	1 100	Oliver Hull,	1 100
James J. Jones,	1 100	W. H. Russell,	1 100
Joseph Delafield,	1 100	Robert Kermit,	1 100
Timothy Dewey,	1 100	G. B. Dorr,	1 100
Alfred Wagstaff,	1 100	George Douglas,	1 100
James E. Dekay,	1 100	Joseph Kernochan,	1 100
Chris. Wolfe,	1 100	Sam. B. Ruggles,	1 100
J. M. Bradhurst,	1 100	James G. King,	1 100
H. W. Field,	1 100	Nathaniel Prime,	1 100
Edward A. Graves,	1 100	G. G. Howland,	1 100
Allison Post,	1 100	Cornelius Baker,	1 100
Nathaniel Paulding,	1 100	Jacob Lorillard,	1 100
John D. Wolfe,	1 100	Wm. F. Cary,	1 100
John G. Coster,	1 100	Thomas Tileston,	1 100
John C. Jay,	1 100	P. Spofford,	1 100
Fr. W. Olmsted,	1 100	C. W. How,	1 100
Luman Reed,	1 100	Wm. S. Packer, Jun.	1 100
John Johnston,	1 100	March & Benson,	1 100
		Saul Alley,	1 100

	Shares.	Doll's.		Shares.	Doll's.
Stewart Brown,	1	100	James Hagarty,	1	100
J. R. St. John,	1	100	Charles A. Heckscher,	1	100
David W. Wetmore,	1	100	Thomas Suffern,	1	100
George P. Rogers,	1	100	E. F. Sanderson,	1	100
George Jones,	1	100	James Brown,	1	100
David Hosack,	1	100	Maria Banyer & Ann		
Martin Hoffman,	1	100	Jay,	1	100
Richard Ray,	1	100	S. S. Howland,	1	100
Gerard H. Coster,	1	100	J. Hunt,	1	100
Jacob R. Le Roy,	1	100	Nicholas Ludlum,	1	100
C. W. Lawrence,	1	100	Robert Tillotson,	1	100
John H. Howland,	1	100			
Peter Schermerhorn,	1	100			
				114	11,400

*The following Gentlemen compose the Committee for soliciting Subscriptions.*

JOSEPH DELAFIELD,	H. W. HICKS,
WILLIAM COOPER,	WM. F. CARY,
JOHN AUGUSTINE SMITH,	ROBERT RAY,
AUGUSTUS FLEMING,	JER. VAN RENNSLAER,
JOHN C. JAY,	FRANCIS W. OLSTEAD.
H. W. FIELD,	

# AN ACT

TO INCORPORATE

## THE LYCEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

IN THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.

*Passed April 20th, 1818.*

WHEREAS the members of the Lyceum of Natural History have petitioned for an act of incorporation, and the Legislature impressed with the importance of the study of Natural History, as connected with the wants, the comforts, and the happiness of mankind, and conceiving it their duty to encourage all laudable attempts to promote the progress of science in this State—therefore

*Be it enacted, by the People of the State of New-York, represented in Senate and Assembly, That Samuel L. Mitchill, Caspar W. Eddy, Frederick C. Schaeffer, Nathaniel Poulding, William Cooper, Benjamin P. Kissam, John Torrey, William Cumberland, D. Jurco V. Knevels, James Clements, and James Pierce, and such other persons as now are, and may from time to time become members, shall be, and hereby are constituted a body corporate and politic, by the name of LYCEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY IN THE CITY OF NEW-YORK, and that by that name they shall have perpetual succession, and shall be persons capable of suing and being sued, pleading and being impleaded, answering and being answered unto, defending and being defended, in all courts and places whatsoever; and may have a common seal, with power to alter the same from time to time; and shall be capable of purchasing, taking, holding, and enjoying, to them and their successors, any real estate in fee*

simple or otherwise, and any goods, chattels, and personal estate, and of selling, leasing, or otherwise disposing of the said real or personal estate, or any part thereof, at their will and pleasure: *Provided always*, that the clear annual value or income of such real or personal estate shall not exceed the sum of five thousand dollars: *Provided*, however, that the funds of the said corporation shall be used and appropriated to the promotion of the objects stated in the preamble to this act, and those only.

*And be it further enacted*, That the said society shall, from time to time, for ever hereafter, have power to make, constitute, ordain, and establish such by-laws and regulations as they shall judge proper, for the election of their officers; for prescribing their respective functions, and the mode of discharging the same; for the admission of new members; for the government of the officers and members thereof; for collecting annual contributions from the members toward the funds thereof; for regulating the times and places of meeting of the said society; for suspending or expelling such members as shall neglect or refuse to comply with the by-laws or regulations, and for the managing or directing the affairs and concerns of the said society; *provided* such by-laws and regulations be not repugnant to the constitution and laws of this State, or of the United States.

*And be it further enacted*, That the officers of the said society shall consist of a president and two vice-presidents, a corresponding secretary, a recording secretary, a treasurer, and five curators, and such other officers as the society may judge necessary; who shall be annually chosen, and who shall continue in office for one year, or until others be elected in their stead: that if the annual election shall not be held at any of the days for that purpose appointed, it shall be lawful to make such election at any other day; and that five members of the said society, assembling at the place and time designated for that purpose by any by-

law or regulation of the society, shall constitute a legal meeting thereof.

*And be it further enacted, That Samuel L. Mitchill shall be the president; Caspar W. Eddy the first vice-president; Frederick C. Schaeffer the second vice-president; Nathaniel Paulding, corresponding secretary; William Cooper, recording secretary; Benjamin P. Kissam, treasurer; and John Torrey, William Cumberland, D. Jurco V. Knevels, James Clements, and James Pierce, curators; severally to be the first officers of the said corporation, who shall hold their respective offices until the twenty-third day of February next, and until others shall be chosen in their places.*

*And be it further enacted, That the present constitution of the said association shall, after passing of this act, continue to be the constitution thereof; and that no alteration shall be made therein, unless by a vote to that effect of three-fourths of the resident members, and upon the request in writing of one-third of such resident members, and submitted at least one month before any vote shall be taken thereupon.*

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*State of New-York, Secretary's Office.*

I CERTIFY the preceding to be a true copy of an original act of the Legislature of this State, on file in this Office.

ALBANY, April 29th, 1818.

ARCH'D CAMPBELL,  
Dep. Sec'ry.

# CONSTITUTION.

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## ARTICLE I.

This society shall be styled "The Lyceum of Natural History in the City of New-York."

## ARTICLE II.

It shall consist of three classes of members, viz. resident, corresponding, and honorary: resident members, such as dwell in the city of New-York and its immediate vicinity; corresponding members, such as reside at a distance from said city, or in other states; and honorary members, such as may be judged worthy, from their attainments in Natural History, to be admitted into the society. The number of honorary members shall never exceed forty.

## ARTICLE III.

All members shall be elected by ballot. Candidates for admission shall be proposed in writing, at least two meetings previous to being balloted for. The affirmative votes of three-fourths of the members present shall be necessary to elect a candidate; honorary or corresponding members, however, may be elected without previous notice, provided that the ballot on such election be unanimous.

## ARTICLE IV.

None but resident members shall be entitled to vote, or be eligible to any office in the society.

## ARTICLE V.

No member who shall be in arrears for one year, shall be entitled to vote, or be eligible to any office in the society.

## ARTICLE VI.

The officers of the society shall consist of a president, two vice-presidents, a first and second ; a corresponding secretary, a recording secretary, a treasurer, five curators, and a librarian, who shall be chosen annually on the fourth Monday of February. There shall also be elected, at every anniversary meeting of the said society, the following committees, viz. a committee of nomination, consisting of five members ; a committee of publication, of five members ; a finance committee, of three members ; and a library committee, of three members ; also, an anniversary orator, and a draughtsman to the Lyceum.

## ARTICLE VII.

The election of officers shall be by ballot, and the person having the greatest number of votes shall be declared duly elected.

## ARTICLE VIII.

Five members at a stated meeting shall form a quorum, and ten at a special meeting.

## ARTICLE IX.

By-laws for the further regulation of the society shall from time to time be made.

## ARTICLE X.

No alteration shall be made in this constitution, unless by a vote to that effect of three-fourths of the resident members, and upon the request in writing of one-third of all the resident members, submitted at least one month previous to any vote being taken thereupon.

## BY-LAWS.



### CHAPTER I.—OF MEMBERS.

All members shall be elected by ballot.

Election for members shall be held on the first meeting of each month only; honorary or corresponding members may be elected at any stated meeting of the society, provided the vote on such elections be unanimous.

Candidates for admission shall be proposed by the committee of nomination, at a meeting previous to their being balloted for; but in case the committee of nomination do not report to the society the name of any candidate who shall have been recommended to them, within one month from the time of such recommendation, the society may proceed to ballot for him at the next stated time of election, on being required by the member who shall have recommended such candidate.

The affirmative votes of three-fourths of the members present shall be necessary to elect a candidate. No person shall be considered a resident member until he shall have signed the constitution and paid his initiation dues.

A resident member, on removing from the city with an intention of residing abroad, on giving notice thereof, and on payment of his arrears, may become a corresponding member; and a corresponding member, who shall remove to the city with an intention of making it his permanent residence, shall become a resident member.

Resident members only shall be entitled to a vote in the choice of officers, and in the general concerns of the society.

No member shall publish any part of the proceedings of the Lyceum, without leave from the committee of publication, or by resolution of the society.

## CHAPTER II.—OF OFFICERS.

The president shall preside at all meetings, and regulate the order thereof; and shall announce donations, and other communications, to the Lyceum. He shall have a casting vote in all cases in which there shall be an equal division among the members. On questions of order, members may appeal from his decision to the society.

The vice-president shall preside in the absence of the president.

The corresponding secretary shall be charged with the correspondence of the Lyceum. It shall be his duty to be present at all meetings of the society, and to read all communications made to him in his official capacity, and also to notify corresponding and honorary members of their election.

The recording secretary shall be present at all meetings of the society, and keep a record of the proceedings thereof. He shall take charge of all papers and documents belonging to the society, and shall notify all resident members of their election.

The treasurer shall have charge of all monies belonging to the Lyceum. He shall receive initiation fees and other dues from members, and shall pay all accounts against the

society, which shall be first audited by the committee of finance. He shall furnish the committee of finance, on due application, with such information of the state of the funds as they may require, and shall report to the Lyceum, on the fourth Monday of February, in each year, the receipts and expenditures of the institution.

The curators shall be separately charged (as may be agreed among themselves) with the safe keeping and arrangement of the several collections, and with the keys of the cabinet.

The curator having charge of any division of the collection shall be alone authorized to select duplicate specimens from such division; and such curator, with the assent of two others, may effect such exchanges.

The increase and improvement of the collections being the inducement to exchange, the curators shall, in no instance, part with any specimen which is not a duplicate, without obtaining thereby an equivalent; nor, in any case, with the best specimens, but as excepted.

### CHAPTER III.—OF COMMITTEES.

The committee of finance shall audit all accounts against the Lyceum, and have the duties and powers of a committee of ways and means.

The committee of publication shall have the exclusive right of directing all the publications of a scientific nature emanating from the society.

It shall be the duty of the committee of nomination to report to the society on the merits of all persons recommended as candidates for admission.

Committees for special purposes may be appointed when required. When such committees consist of three members, the nomination thereof shall vest in the president.

All donations, excepting of books, and all written communications, shall be referred to a special committee, who shall report thereon with all convenient speed.

#### CHAPTER IV.—OF CONTRIBUTIONS.

Every resident member, at the time of his admission, shall pay into the treasury the sum of ten dollars, (for which the person proposing said member shall be accountable,) and shall be subject to an annual contribution of four dollars, payable quarterly, on the first Monday of May, August, November, and February, in each year.

Every corresponding member shall be liable for the sum of five dollars, as an initiation fee, (foreign correspondents only excepted,) which sum shall be paid by the member who shall propose such corresponding member, at the next meeting after his election.

No member, who shall be in arrears for dues for one year, shall be entitled to a vote, or be eligible to any office; and if any member, so in arrears, shall neglect or refuse to liquidate his dues within three months after notification thereof, his name shall be erased from the list of members.

#### CHAPTER V.—OF THE CABINET.

1. All donations shall have the names of the donors affixed thereto.
2. Every member shall have free access to the cabinet, subject to the regulation of the curators.

3. No specimen in Natural History, as a deposit, shall be removed from the rooms of the society.

4. No deposits shall be received into the cabinet, other than such as belong to the institution.

5. The curators shall arrange, in systematic order, all the specimens of Natural History, and keep a catalogue of the same; and shall report, on the first Monday in March, in each year, the state of the property confided to their charge.

#### CHAPTER VI.—OF THE LIBRARY.

1. The library to be under the control of the librarian and a standing committee of three, to be termed the Library Committee.

2. No book to be purchased, except by a recommendation to that effect, signed by a majority of this committee, and ratified by the society.

3. The librarian to be furnished with a book, in which shall be inserted the names of borrowers, the time when taken out, and when returned.

4. He shall mark on the printed catalogue, such books as shall be determined not to be taken out in any case whatsoever.

5. These books to be designated by a special committee appointed for that purpose.

6. No book to be borrowed without permission asked and obtained at a regular meeting of the Lyceum.

7. The librarian, or, in his absence, one of the library committee, will note the volume borrowed.

8. A volume not returned within two weeks, shall incur a fine of fifty cents, which shall be doubled if kept a week longer.

9. Any injury done to works shall be estimated by the committee, and the borrower fined accordingly.

10. The librarian to report, at the business meetings of May and November, the fines collected, and pay the same over to the treasurer.

11. A borrower shall take out a work on the evening permission has been granted, or shall be considered as having forfeited the permission.

12. No member shall take out more than two volumes at one time, nor take out for another member, except in his absence.

13. On the first Monday in June, all books shall be called in ; and a special committee of three shall examine the library, and compare it with the catalogue. They shall note all missing books, and report the same, at the next meeting, to the society.

#### CHAPTER VII.—OF MEETINGS.

1. The *ordinary* meetings shall be held on Monday evening, in each week, at seven o'clock, and five members shall form a quorum.

2. The president, or either of the vice-presidents, with any five members, may call a special meeting.

3. Visitors at the sittings of the Lyceum shall be introduced by one or more members, and their names shall be announced by the president to the society.

4. During the months of July, August, and September, the stated meetings of the society shall be held only on the first Mondays of said months.

#### CHAPTER VIII.—OF BUSINESS.

No business shall be considered in order, or recorded on the minutes, which does not relate to the subject of Natural History, or to the economical regulations of the society.

All business, other than what relates immediately to the cultivation of Natural History, shall be transacted at the *first meeting of each month only.*

The by-laws shall be read at the first meetings in January, April, July, and October.

The following shall be considered the *regular order of business* at the ORDINARY MEETINGS.

1. The minutes of the preceding meeting read, and the sense of the members taken thereon.
2. The names of visitors announced.
3. Initiation of new members.
4. Reports of committees.
5. Communications read, or donations made.
6. Any other business which may be in order, or called up.
7. Books borrowed and returned.
8. Rough minutes read.
9. Adjournment.

## BUSINESS MEETINGS.

February, 4th Mond.	Annual Elec-	August.
	Treasurer's Report—Libra-	September.
	rian's do.	October. By-laws read.
March.	Curator's Report.	November. Librarian's Report of
April.	By-laws read.	Fines.
May.	Librarian's Report of Fines.	December.
June.	Committee appointed to examine the Library.	January. By-laws read.
July.	By-laws read.	February. Notice given to prepare Reports.





